



Memorandum

TO: Public Safety, Finance and
Strategic Support Committee

SUBJECT: FIRE DEPARTMENT
QUARTERLY REPORT

FROM: Darryl Von Raesfeld

DATE: August 6, 2008

Approved Deanna Antea

Date 8/8/08

INFORMATION

The following Quarterly Report to the Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee is intended to provide an update on Fire Department activities during the months of April through June 2008 (although some information beyond this time period is provided). Items included in this report are of strategic importance to the Department and the City. This report provides a brief summary regarding the status and progress of these projects during the most recently completed quarter.

Planning (e.g., Staffing, Resource Deployment)

Fire Prevention Business Plan

Following the Mayor's March 2005 Budget Message, the Department was directed to develop a Fire Prevention Business Plan. The goal of the Business Plan is to identify service level objectives for fire prevention services and identify steps to implement fully the recommendations of the 2003 City Auditor's Report titled, "An Audit of the San Jose Fire Department's Bureau of Fire Prevention." Currently, the Fire Department is working with a consultant for a key element of the business plan. The scope of work for this study includes a report on fire prevention best practices and a risk-based inspection schedule planning methodology for inclusion in the business plan. The Fire Department's goal is to have a business plan ready for City Council review by the end of the 2008 calendar year.

Recruiting/Hiring

On July 14, 2008, twenty-five paramedic recruits began the 18-week Firefighter Recruit Academy. This group of recruits will graduate and promote to probationary firefighters in November. This recruit class is the last group hired from the Qualified Candidate Group list established in May 2006.

In May 2008, a new Firefighter Recruit Qualified Candidate Group was established. The Department is in the process of selecting recruits from this new list for a Firefighter Recruit (Paramedic) Academy to begin in January 2009. In anticipation of a significant number of retirements in January 2009, the Department is also planning for a Firefighter Recruit (EMT) Academy in May 2009 and an additional Academy in September 2009.

The Department is hosting a second Recruitment Forum on September 18, 2008. The purpose of the Recruitment Forum is to inform the San Jose community of career opportunities in the San Jose Fire Department. The Department plans to hold Recruitment Forums twice a year at locations throughout the City.

With the permanent appointment of Chief Von Raesfeld, the Department is working with the Human Resources Department to begin the recruitment process to permanently fill the positions of Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief, and Deputy Director.

Technology

TeleStaff Migration Project

In January of 2008 planning for the TeleStaff Migration Project began. The project's scope was conceived and defined as follows:

- Migrate completely from TeleStaff 1.4 to TeleStaff 2.31
- Add all 40 hour sworn personnel into the system (excluding Fire Dispatchers)
- Create a new payroll reconciliation process
- Training and support materials for all users
- Replace existing server

As of July 2008, the migration to Telestaff 2.31 is complete and all personnel through the rank of battalion chief are using the program for all timekeeping data entry. Training for approximately 750 firefighters is complete and TeleStaff Tutorial Guides with four separate training modules have been completed and distributed. The first three modules went to stations and administrative work areas, while certain specified administrative personnel received the fourth training module related to managing the system. An electronic version of the tutorials has also been posted to the "Y drive" for department-wide access. Finally, the single-server network system has been replaced with a three-server system providing increased speed, reliability, and capacity for expansion. It is located in a secure environment at OMLK and archive data is downloaded several times each day to an off-site backup computer.

Radio System Infrastructure

The Fire Department radio system continues to improve. Through July, mobile repeater systems have been installed in four of 11 trucks and USARs. The remaining repeaters will be installed as vehicles are sent to the shop for scheduled preventative maintenance. Installation of additional primary channel radio receiver sites is in progress and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the 2008 calendar year. The primary dispatch channel has been upgraded to improve transmission/ reception and associated software programming is scheduled to be completed by November; unfortunately, there were no available frequencies to support a similar upgrade to one of the command channels. The microwave system upgrade is scheduled to be completed in 2009.

Mobile Data Computers (MDC)

The devices have been installed in all engines and trucks. A funding source to finish installation of devices into satellite units has been identified and all installations are scheduled to be completed by November. When devices have been installed in all units, efforts will focus on adding staff resources to support MDC/AVL software programming/ maintenance. After all emergency response vehicles are equipped with MDC/AVL capability and the entire system has been thoroughly tested, operational analyses can be performed to identify and quantify the most efficient and effective means to operate an automatic vehicle location (AVL) tracking and dispatch system.

Records Management System

The Training and Activities modules are ready for beta testing. The Incident and EMS modules have a few remaining configuration and data entry issues to refine before beta testing will begin. The Medtronic (defibrillator) interface is being enhanced to include minor modifications to existing features as well as expanding the number and type of import options. Most computer assisted dispatch (CAD) issues have been resolved. The CAD Monitor system malfunctioned and had to be reconfigured. It has since been restored to its pre-mishap state. The Telestaff Gateway is installed and fully functional.

Twenty company officers and 20 paramedics will perform the beta test. The group has met and agreed on the test procedure and expectations. User support, resources, curriculum, and documentation have been discussed, preparatory tasks assigned, and the chain-of-command notified. User training is scheduled to begin this month (August).

Omega Protocol

Implementation of the EMS module in the records management system (RMS), scheduled for September 2008, will resolve the data integrity issues which have prevented the Department from performing the clinical and operational research necessary to test and implement the Omega Protocol. Once the EMS module is fully implemented and the necessary preparatory research completed, the Department anticipates it will be ready to submit a proposal to the County for modifying EMS responses to requests for service to Omega incident types by June 2009.

Capital Projects

Public Safety Bond Update

Relocated Stations 12 (Calero) and 17 (Blossom Hill) remain on schedule to open in the fall of 2008. The relocated Station 2 (Alum Rock) construction contract is now scheduled to go out for bid in late summer 2008. Staff has secured a site at Craigmont and Alum Rock Ave. and is working with Public Works and General Services to prepare the site for relocating Engine 2 during the station's reconstruction. Temporary relocation of Engine 2 is necessary to mitigate impacts to response time performance within Station 2's first due district during the reconstruction of Station 2.

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The contract for Station 19 (Piedmont) construction was awarded July 23 with a preconstruction meeting scheduled for August 13. The relocated Station 24/36 construction contract remains on schedule to go out for bid in the fall of 2008. Council voted to keep a measure on the November ballot to construct Station 37 on the southeast corner of the Lincoln Glen Park parking lot at the corner of Lincoln and Curtner Avenues at its August 5 meeting. The Department, along with Public Works Real Estate, continues their effort to identify possible sites for relocated Station 21 (Mt. Pleasant).

Heart Safe City

The Mayor's March Budget Message for the 2007-2008 Fiscal Year directed the City Manager to "develop a plan to meet the criteria for San José to become a Heart Safe City and present it to the Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee." These criteria, according to the American Heart Association (AHA), will measure a City's commitment to preventing death from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) by evaluating the strength of the four links in the "Chain of Survival." The specific criteria and method for becoming designated as a Heart Safe City are still being defined by interested stakeholders, the City, and County.

Staff has identified several possible sources of funding (including local, state, and federal agencies as well as private foundations) to support development and ongoing management of a lead organization. In addition, staff has met with a group of interested cities from around the Bay Area and received a positive response to the underlying principles of the San Jose effort as well as numerous requests for follow up conversations.


DARRYL VON RAESFELD
Fire Chief



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